



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

Edinburgh Research Explorer

STEEP TRAIL TOURING EXHIBITION

Citation for published version:

Todd, G, Ho, R, Xeida, W & Owen, J, *STEEP TRAIL TOURING EXHIBITION*, 2013, Exhibition.
<<http://www.edinburghsculpture.org>>

Link:

[Link to publication record in Edinburgh Research Explorer](#)

Document Version:

Early version, also known as pre-print

General rights

Copyright for the publications made accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer is retained by the author(s) and / or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing these publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

Take down policy

The University of Edinburgh has made every reasonable effort to ensure that Edinburgh Research Explorer content complies with UK legislation. If you believe that the public display of this file breaches copyright please contact openaccess@ed.ac.uk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



For immediate release
Contact details:

Diana Sykes
Fife Contemporary Art & Craft

The Town Hall
Queen's Gardens
St Andrews
KY16 9TA
Telephone 01334 474610
Fax 01334 479880
diana.sykes@fcac.co.uk
www.fcac.co.uk



Steep Trail

New Year will be celebrated twice at St Andrews Museum through the **Steep Trail** exhibition mounted by **Fife Contemporary Art & Craft (FCA&C)**. Opening on 19 January and running until 3 March it brings together new work by Jonathan Owen and Graeme Todd from Scotland and Rania Ho and Wang Xieda from China. There will be cause therefore to celebrate Chinese New Year on 10 February as well as the arrival of 2013.

The exhibition is part of the larger **Steep Trail** project organised with east coast partners **Polarcap** (based in Dunbar) and the **Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop**. It takes its name from pioneer environmentalist John Muir's book 'Steep Trails', a volume of his collected letters and articles. Born in Dunbar Muir emigrated to America in the mid 19th century where he became famous as the instigator of the National Parks system. He travelled to China to study forestry and collect seeds and **Steep Trail** uses this historic link as a departure point for making contemporary links between Scotland and China at a time of major concerns about the environment. Muir's legacy is not so well known in his country of birth as in the US but perhaps surprisingly both of the Chinese artists were aware of his work and interested in his ideas.

During the summer of 2012 an artist exchange took place with Wang Xieda (courtesy of The James Cohan Gallery) and Rania Ho. They spent a month in Edinburgh, as two of the first residents of the new Bill Scott Sculpture Centre, and also visited St Andrews. In return Jonathan Owen and Graeme Todd started their visit to China in Shanghai, and also travelled to Beijing and the Mongolian mountains.

Visitors to the **Steep Trail** exhibition will see a range of outcomes from the exchange - complemented by facsimile drawings of glaciers from John Muir's sketchbooks (courtesy of the Holt-Atherton Special Collections at the University of the Pacific). Elegant minimal sculptures by Wang Xieda have been inspired by ancient Chinese pictograms and evoke geographical forms. Rania Ho has designed special wallpaper which refers to both the tradition of oriental decoration and to John Muir. Intriguing drawings by Jonathan Owen manipulate scenes by the mysterious removal of a component. Graeme Todd's intricate abstract paintings have echoes of oriental landscapes concealed within them.

During the exhibition, free children's activities linked to its themes will be available in the activity room adjacent to the gallery. In addition, two workshops have been organised to coincide with the February school break on 14 & 15 with a Family Fun Day on Saturday 16 February. A public tour of the exhibition with exhibiting artist Graeme Todd will take place on Sunday 24 February] and FCA&C is also happy to provide free, guided tours of the exhibition at St Andrews Museum to any group or school. To make a booking for this, please email FCA&C (mail@fcac.co.uk). A special winter walk & talk event has also been arranged at St Andrews Botanic Garden on 2 March (contact mail@fcac.co.uk or 01334 474610 to book a place).

##ENDS

Visitor Information

St Andrews Museum

Kinburn Park, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DP, Tel 01334 659380

Opening Times: Daily Oct-Mar 10.30am-4pm / Free admission

Exhibition organised by Fife Contemporary Art & Craft in partnership with Polarcap and Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop.

www.fcac.co.uk

Notes to Editors

- **Fife Contemporary Art & Craft** is a leading visual art and craft agency that create exciting opportunities for the people of Fife and beyond to experience quality exhibitions and events, and to participate in projects with local, national and international artists and makers.
- **Polarcap** provides a platform for artists' discussion and creative exchange and aims to bring high quality contemporary art to as wide an audience as possible with particular concerns for venues out with the city environs. It originates exhibitions, publications and project manages commissions and educational activities.
- **Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop's** programme supports emerging and mid-career artists working at a local, national and international level through residencies, talks, funded awards, exhibiting opportunities and a professional development programme. Through its education programme the organisation aims to promote an appreciation and understanding of contemporary sculpture to a diverse audience.
- **The Steep Trail** exhibition is part of the broader **Steep Trail** project which encompasses art/eco labs first held in summer 2010, a Scotland-China artists' exchange which took place summer 2012, the exhibition touring in 2013, a conference to be held in East Lothian in 2013 and a publication to be published in 2013.
- **The Steep Trail** takes its title from the book **Steep Trails**, originally published in 1918, which brought together a number of writings by pioneer environmentalist John Muir. The book is available to download free in electronic form at www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/326
- **Wang Xieda's** work is shown courtesy **The James Cohan Gallery**, Shanghai.
- **St Andrews Museum** is a Fife Council Museum, managed by the Fife Cultural Trust since the beginning of October 2012.



JAMES COHAN GALLERY SHANGHAI